

Flavio Briatore

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Generally Accepted Facts from **Wikipedia**

Flavio Briatore (born 12 April 1950) is an Italian businessman. He started his career as a restaurant manager and insurance salesman in Italy. Briatore was convicted in Italy on several fraud charges in the 1980s, though the convictions

were successively extinguished by an amnesty. Briatore set up a number of successful Benetton franchises as a fugitive in the Virgin Islands and the United States. In 1990, he was promoted by Luciano Benetton to manager of the Benetton Formula One racing team, which became Renault F1 in 2002. From 2007 to 2010, he was part-owner and chairman of London's Queens Park Rangers F.C.. On 16 September 2009, Briatore was forced to resign from the ING Renault F1 team due to his involvement in race fixing at the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix. After the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) conducted its own investigation, Briatore was banned indefinitely from any events sanctioned by the FIA, although this ban was later overturned by a French Tribunal de Grande Instance.

Benetton Career

Briatore moved to Milan and worked for Finanziaria Generale Italia at the Italian stock exchange. During this period, he met Luciano Benetton, founder of the Benetton clothing company.

He was convicted of multiple counts of fraud in the 1980s, receiving two prison sentences. In 1984, a court in Bergamo found Briatore guilty of various counts of fraud and he was fined and sentenced to 1 year and 6 months in prison. The sentence was subsequently reduced to 1 year by a court of appeal in 1988. In 1986, in Milan, Briatore was sentenced to 3 years for fraud and conspiracy for his role in a team of confidence tricksters who, over a number of years, set up rigged gambling games using fake playing cards. The judges described these as elaborate confidence tricks, in which victims were invited to dinner and then "ensnared" in rigged games that involved a cast of fictional characters and realized enormous profits for their perpetrators. After an appeal in 1987, the sentence was reduced to 1 year and 2 months. To avoid imprisonment, Briatore lived in Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands. He never went to prison and returned to the EU after both convictions were extinguished by amnesty. In 2010, a Turin court ordered Briatore rehabilitated, which by Italian Criminal Code results in the extinction "of any criminal effect of the conviction"

During Briatore's fugitive status, he maintained close relations with Benetton and opened some Benetton stores in the Virgin Islands. When Benetton opened his first five stores in the United States in 1979, he appointed Briatore as director of the group's American operations. Thanks to Benetton's methods of franchising, the chain experienced a brief boom in popularity in the US, where, by 1989, there were 800 Benetton stores. Briatore, having taken a cut of each franchising agreement, became very wealthy. As store owners began to complain of competition from other Benetton stores, the number of stores decreased to 200 and Briatore began to look for a new business. In 1999, the *Corriere della Sera* wrongfully reported that he had been arrested in Nairobi on suspicion of fraud relating to real estate in Kenya, but further to a libel claim brought by Briatore against the newspaper, this allegation proved to be untrue and Briatore was compensated.

Renault Formula One crash controversy

Wikinews has related news: Renault F1's team boss, top engineer quit as team accepts cheating claim
Briatore resigned as team principal of Renault due to a race fixing scandal. The controversy centered on an early crash involving Nelson Piquet, Jr.'s car during the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix of 28 September 2008, when he was still driving for Renault. At the time, Piquet Jr. described the crash as a simple mistake; however, shortly after his acrimonious departure from Renault and criticism of Briatore nearly a year later in August 2009,

allegations surfaced that he had deliberately crashed to help Renault team mate Fernando Alonso, who went on to win the race. After a Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) investigation, on 4 September 2009 Renault were charged with conspiracy and race fixing, and were due to face the FIA World Motor Sport Council in Paris on 21 September 2009. In return for immunity from punishment, Piquet Jr. had reportedly stated to the FIA that he had been asked to crash by Briatore and Renault chief engineer Pat Symonds. On 11 September, following leaks of Piquet Jr.'s evidence, Renault and Briatore stated they would take legal action against Piquet, Jr. for making false allegations; however, five days later, Renault announced they would not contest the charges, and that Briatore and Symonds had left the team. The day after the Renault announcement, Renault confirmed Briatore had resigned from the team, while Briatore himself stated of his departure that "I was just trying to save the team", "It's my duty. That's the reason I've finished." The team issued the following official statement:

The ING Renault F1 Team will not dispute the recent allegations made by the FIA concerning the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix.

It also wishes to state that its managing director, Flavio Briatore and its executive director of engineering, Pat Symonds, have left the team.

At the same hearing, the FIA banned Briatore from FIA-sanctioned events indefinitely. The FIA also stated that it would not renew any superlicence granted to Briatore-managed drivers—effectively barring him from managing drivers who participate in any competition that is under the FIA's authority. The FIA stated that it was coming down hard on Briatore because he denied his involvement despite overwhelming evidence, and that Renault's actions were serious enough to merit being thrown out of F1. However, since Renault took swift action by forcing Briatore and Symonds to resign once the affair came to light, the FIA effectively placed the team on two years' probation. If Renault committed a comparable offense between 2009 and 2011, they were to be indefinitely banned from F1. British newspaper The Daily Mirror described the ban as the harshest sanction ever imposed on an individual in the history of motorsport.

Briatore later said he was "distracted" at the FIA's action, and sued the FIA in French courts to clear his name. On 5 January 2010, the Tribunal de Grande Instance overturned the ban and granted him €15,000 in compensation. The tribunal declared in particular that "the decision of the World Council was presided over by the FIA president, who was well known to be in conflict with Briatore, with Mr Mosley having played a leading role in launching the inquiry and its investigation in violation of the principle of separation of the power of the bodies". The FIA announced that it would appeal the decision issued by the French court, but the two parties reached an out-of-court settlement the following April.

In an interview with *Gazzetta dello Sport*, Briatore said that he is sure that he will not return to Formula One, despite having his ban overturned.

Queens Park Rangers Football Club

In 2007 Briatore was linked to a takeover of English Championship football club Queens Park Rangers (QPR) from a Monaco-based consortium led by Gianni Paladini. On 1 September 2007 it was officially announced that Briatore (along with Bernie Ecclestone and Lakshmi Mittal) had bought the club. On 7 November 2007, Briatore completed his takeover of QPR together with Ecclestone. He served as the club's chairman.

In December 2007, Briatore and Ecclestone were joined as co-owners of QPR by multi-billionaire Lakshmi Mittal, who bought 20% of the club.

Following Briatore's ban from FIA, the Football League requested that FIA provide details of its investigation. The Football League could force Briatore out of QPR under rules that stipulate a club owner must be a "fit and proper person". The Football League also has the power to ban owners who have been banned from another sporting organisation. The Football League board discussed the matter on 8 October 2009 and declared that they would be awaiting a response from Briatore to various questions before commenting further. It was announced that he had stepped down from the post effective 19 February 2010.

When interviewed about the QPR experience at an Italian chat show he stated "I will never invest in a Football Club again, it's only ever a good idea if you're very rich and looking for ways to waste your money. In two years you'll be very poor and won't have that problem anymore"

Business interests

Briatore has developed a diverse portfolio of business interests outside Formula 1, many of which revolve around fashion.

He created the Billionaire brand in 1998 and owns a club in Sardinia which has since closed; in August 2012 he opened another Billionaire Club in Marbella under that name along with an haute couture line, Billionaire Italian Couture. In addition to that, he opened Cipriani's restaurant in Mayfair, London, in 2004 and until 2007 owned 48.9% of the pharmaceuticals company Pierrel. He also operates a Tuscan beach club and Lion in the Sun, a holiday resort in Kenya. Briatore is a beneficiary of Autumn Sailing Ltd, which purchased the super yacht Force Blue from Home Shopping Network investor Roy Speer for £68.2m. She was given a refitted interior designed by Celeste dell'Anna and a blue exterior. The yacht was then chartered by a number of individuals including Briatore, who named it as the most extravagant present he had ever bought himself. In 2010, the yacht was seized by officers investigating a tax fraud over its charter status and VAT on fuel. The Italian Supreme Court ruled that there were no issues with the seizure, though the yacht itself was released.

Additional Relevant Facts

[\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

Relationship to #Pizzagate

Connection to Jeffrey Epstein

Jeffrey Epstein's house butler, Alfredo Rodriguez, identified individuals in Epstein's "Little Black Book" who had material information about Epstein's illicit activities. From the Gawker article, *Here Is Pedophile Billionaire Jeffrey Epstein's Little Black Book*, by Nick Bryant, published on January 23rd, 2015:[\[3\]](#)

According to an FBI affidavit, Rodriguez described the address book and the information contained within it as the "Holy Grail" or "Golden Nugget" to unraveling Epstein's sprawling child-sex network. But despite having been subpoenaed for everything he had on his former boss, Rodriguez didn't share it with the FBI or Palm Beach Police

The plot backfired when the attorney reported Rodriguez to the FBI, and he was promptly charged with obstruction of justice. But not before he had, according to the FBI affidavit laying out the crime, marked up the book and an accompanying notepad with "handwritten notes" that contained "information material to the underlying investigation that would have been extremely useful in investigating and prosecuting the case, including the names and contact information of material witnesses and additional victims."

[illegible]

Connection to Raffaello Follieri



Raffaello Follieri (L) & Flavio Briatore (R) (and others)

The connection between Briatore and [Raffaello Follieri](#) is unclear. We do have a photo of the two of them (and significant others) in a professional shot at the birthday party of famous Lebanese jeweler, Fawaz Gruosi [\[4\]](#), in which it seems like Follieri and Briatore know each other.

Connection to [Silvio Berlusconi](#)

[\[5\]\[6\]](#)

Connection to [Naomi Campbell](#)

Engaged to [Naomi Campbell](#) from 1999 to 2003.[\[7\]\[8\]](#) Campbell now considers Briatore her mentor.[\[9\]](#)

Naomi Campbell would also fly on sex offender [Jeffrey Epstein](#)'s plane, according to flight logs, and also appear in Epstein's Little Black Book (though without the same designation as Briatore by house butler, Rodriguez).[\[10\]](#)

Connection to [Bernie Ecclestone](#)

[Bernie Ecclestone](#), the former head of Formula One, made numerous investments with Flavio Briatore.

Also in Jeffrey Epstein's "Little Black Book"

(Likely) Connection to exclusive club, [Pugs](#)

Flavio Briatore is likely involved in the social circle of Pugs as his former fiancée [\[11\]](#) and current mentee [\[12\]](#), [Naomi Campbell](#), was a prospective "Mistress of Chamber" and Briatore's consistent business partner, [Bernie Ecclestone](#), was also considered as a prospective member. Most important, however, is Flavio Briatore's connection to Jeffrey Epstein, who, as shown above, has a strong connection to various members of Pugs.

Flavio Briatore was one of the people [Jeffrey Epstein](#)'s house butler, Alfredo Rodriguez, designated in Epstein's "Little Black Book" as someone who knew material information about Epstein's illicit activities. For more information, including document citations, see above.

It should also be noted that Naomi Campbell and Bernie Ecclestone are both in Jeffrey Epstein's "Little Black Book" as well, but without the same designation as Briatore.

Connection to [Malindi](#), Kenya

[\[13\]](#)

Themes

[The Clothing Industry](#)

[Formula One](#)

UK Football

In Media
